

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES DIVISION**

**DSHS INTERNET WEBSITE USABILITY STUDY  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
# 0634-216**

***Project Title:***        **DSHS Internet Website Redesign**

***Estimated Contract Period:*** August 14, 2006 through June 30, 2007.  
Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of DSHS.

***Proposal Due Date:*** All Proposals whether mailed or hand delivered must arrive by 5:00 p.m. Pacific day light time on June 20, 2006. **Faxed bids WILL NOT be accepted. Emailed bids WILL be accepted.**

***Submit Proposal To:***        **Proposal Delivered by Mail:**  
Sandra G. Elliot, RFP Coordinator  
Department of Social and Health Services  
Administrative Services Division / Central  
Contract Services  
PO BOX 45811  
Olympia, WA 98504-5811

**Proposal Delivered by Express / Hand Delivery, Or Courier:**  
Sandra G. Elliot, RFP Coordinator  
Department of Social and Health Services  
Administrative Services Division / Central  
Contract Services  
4500 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE  
Lacey, WA 98503

**Proposal Delivered by Email:**  
Sandra G. Elliot, RFP Coordinator  
Department of Social and Health Services  
Administrative Services Division / Central  
Contract Services  
[EllioSG@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:EllioSG@dshs.wa.gov)

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**The following elements of the procurement are posted separately on the DSHS Procurements Website**

- Exhibit A- Definitions
- Exhibit B- Bidder Information, Certifications and Assurances Form
- Exhibit C- Sample Contract

# SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

## A. PURPOSE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) of Washington State seeks responses to this Request for Proposal (RFP) from persons and organizations qualified to provide consulting services for the following objectives.

1. Objective 1 - Provide Web usability classroom training to designated DSHS Web professionals in the principles and application of usability testing.
2. Objective 2 – Conduct a usability study and testing of the DSHS Internet Website in partnership with designated DSHS staff transferring knowledge and mentoring in all aspects of Web usability study and testing. Establish a baseline for future comparisons and orient information architecture of the DSHS Internet Website to our customers. Analyze test results, build requirements and provide recommendations for a redesign of the DSHS Internet Website with a user-centered view of DSHS programs and services. Incorporate quality assurance measures used to monitor and report on the effectiveness of the services provided.
3. Objective 3 – Provide tools needed for testing, training and tracking performance and best practices. DSHS will have those tools for future use at no additional cost.
4. Objective 4 - Provide approximately 20 hours per month of consulting services on usability testing through the life of the contract outside objective 1 through Objective 3.

DSHS will use the Department of Information Services (DIS) Web Usability Test Lab located in Olympia, Washington for the Web usability training and testing, and the DSHS Information System Services Division (ISSD) Test Lab for conducting accessibility testing.

These services are required for approximately an eleven-month period from the start date of the contract. The project cost shall be based upon the deliverables, time and materials per hour rate not to exceed total project cost of \$200,000.

Bidders must submit a written proposal to respond to this RFP. Bidders must comply with all requirements of this RFP, or DSHS may reject your proposal as nonresponsive.

See “Exhibit A – Definitions” for the meaning of various terms used in this RFP.

## B. BACKGROUND

DSHS is a state umbrella agency providing human services to the citizens of Washington State. Various services are provided through partnership with families, community groups, religious organizations, private providers and government agencies. DSHS consists of an Executive Administration and five Service Area Administrations. Each Administration through their divisions provides specialized services to Washington State individuals in need. DSHS is increasingly using the Internet to inform, educate and offer services to our customers. The current DSHS Internet Website consists of approximately 16,000 Web pages and each DSHS Administration has a presence through the DSHS Internet Website.

DSHS is redesigning the Website to facilitate access by DSHS customers, service partners, vendors, government officials, the public, and the news media, to a more usable and accessible Internet Website. A major part of the redesign effort is to coordinate and facilitate "usability studies" with our customers and standardize and centralize Web content using the Interwoven TeamSite Content Management System (CMS). It is also critical to provide a unified presentation and reduce redundant processes when publishing information on the DSHS Internet Website.

The volume of DSHS Website Page content and the number of staff contributing to that content is increasing daily. The skill level and tools used by content providers and site developers vary throughout the agency. To create a seamless, integrated DSHS Website, advanced TeamSite functionality will be used throughout the redesign.

Like other rapidly expanding Websites, the DSHS Website can be difficult to use for some individuals searching for information and / or services. Some of the common problems are:

- Visitors have to click too many times to reach the content they need.
- They often encounter an overwhelming number of choices, and may be confused by differences in navigation from page to page.
- Some of the content may be difficult to understand.

DSHS will use the usability test results to redesign the Website taking into consideration the DSHS Web Standards (NetGuide) including standards for accessibility. DSHS is committed to provide employees and the public, including individuals with disabilities, access to the Web-based information, programs and services. The DSHS NetGuide Standards can be viewed at:  
<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/NetGuide>

DSHS will share the results and models from this work with DSHS Service Area Administrations. The findings, results and models will be reviewed with the DSHS Web Standards Team and the Agency Communication Subgroup for inclusion in the next update of the DSHS NetGuide.

The project's goal in redesigning the DSHS Internet Website ([www1.dshs.wa.gov](http://www1.dshs.wa.gov)) is to make it easier for customers to find and understand information.

## C. PROJECT SCOPE

The successful bidder will be expected to enter into a contract to provide the following types of Web usability services.

1. Service Deliverable 1: Web Usability Classroom Training – To meet Objective 1 as specified in Section I.A.1.

A goal of this project is to increase the ability of DSHS staff to improve the DSHS Internet Website. The Contractor will need to be able to provide classroom training in the following areas:

- 1.1 Basic usability testing to gain knowledge on the fundamentals of user-centered design processes, critical practices and techniques.
- 1.2 Practical usability testing to learn testing techniques to help redesign the DSHS Internet Website with a user-centered view of DSHS programs and services.
- 1.3 Research to effectively apply exploratory research to a user-centered design.
- 1.4 User-centered analysis and conceptual design to learn methods of effectively analyzing user-centered requirements and build user-centered conceptual designs.

DSHS prefers to have the Web usability classroom training in a block of approximately 24 slots so other agencies can purchase and attend the usability training. The training could be scheduled in two (2) tracks with groups of approximately twelve (12) individuals per track repeating the training track to meet our schedule needs. Proposed training schedule must be approved by DSHS.

DSHS at its own discretion may extend the contract for two (2) additional one year teams for future usability training.

2. Service Deliverable 2: DSHS Internet Website Usability Study and Testing - To meet Objective 2 as specified in Section I.A.2.

A goal of this project is to conduct a usability study and testing and develop a core group of DSHS staff who possess expertise in all aspects of Web usability. The Contractor will provide a full Web usability study and testing plan. The contractor will execute the implementation of the plan in partnership with designated DSHS Web specialists to transfer knowledge and provide mentoring in aspects of Web usability study and testing including, but not limited to:

- 2.1 Establishing baseline data on the usability of the DSHS Internet Website for future comparison.

- 2.2 Defining test goals.
  - 2.3 Selecting and recruiting users for testing.
  - 2.4 Selecting tasks to test, developing task scenarios.
  - 2.5 Determining how to measure usability.
  - 2.6 Preparing test materials.
  - 2.7 Conducting a pilot test and revising materials.
  - 2.8 Conducting usability tests.
  - 2.9 Card sorting to learn how users organize DSHS Internet Website information.
  - 2.10 Analyzing data and provide reports documenting test results, issues and recommendations.
  - 2.11 Identifying major problems users have finding information on the DSHS Internet Website.
  - 2.12 Comparing data based on usability analysis results.
  - 2.13 Building requirements supported by the analysis to redesign the DSHS Internet Website with a user-centered view of DSHS programs and services.
  - 2.14 Providing recommendations for the DSHS Internet Website redesign.
  - 2.15 Preparing video documentation for oral presentations and participating in the oral presentation of usability test results.
  - 2.16 Measuring redesigned DSHS's home page and other high-level pages.
  - 2.17 Incorporating quality assurance measures used to monitor and report on the effectiveness of the services provided.
3. Service Deliverable 3: Usability Tool Development - To meet Objective 3 as specified in Section I.A.3.

Usability tools are needed for current and future testing, training, and tracking performance and best practices. The Contractor should be able to provide usability tools including, but not limited to:

- 3.1 Testing materials and forms.
- 3.2 Questionnaires and observation guides for interviewing and observing Web users.

3.3 Questionnaires for screening and recruiting volunteers for usability testing.

4. Service Deliverable 4: Web Usability Consulting through the life of the contract - To meet Objective 4 as specified in Section I.A.4.

Contractor services are required at an expert level to provide guidance and advice to DSHS staff in the following areas:

- 4.1 Establishing baseline data on usability.
- 4.2 Recommending how to reorganize a complex Website to improve usability.
- 4.3 Measuring improvements.
- 4.4 Integrating usability into the planning and development of a redesigned DSHS Internet Website.
- 4.5 Analyzing results of usability tests and making recommendations to improve usability.
- 4.6 Usability testing of prototypes recommending design improvements.
- 4.7 Developing online surveys and user recruitment screening tools, and analyzing results.

The plan should include an estimated rate for approximately 20 hours per month of ongoing consulting services through the life of the contract.

5. Service 5: Other vendor proposed deliverables and activities, if any.

## **D. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

Bidders must meet the following requirements to be eligible to submit a proposal to this RFP. If your proposal does not meet all eligibility requirements for this RFP, DSHS may consider your proposal nonresponsive and withdraw it from consideration at any time.

1. Bidder's Qualifications

For a proposal to be considered, the bidder must have the following qualifications. If you do not meet the requested qualification, DSHS may consider your proposal nonresponsive and may withdraw it from consideration.

- 1.1 Usability Professionals' Association Membership - The bidder must be a member of the Usability Professionals' Association (UPA):  
[http://www.upassoc.org/people\\_pages/consultants\\_directory/index.html](http://www.upassoc.org/people_pages/consultants_directory/index.html)  
.
- 1.2 Knowledge of W3C (World Wide Web Consortium) - The proposed team should have knowledge of W3C <http://www.w3c.com>.
- 1.3 Usability Analyst Certification – The proposed team lead must possess Usability Analyst certification.
- 1.4 Web Usability Testing Skills – Each individual of the proposed team should have at least three years of practical knowledge and experience in Web usability testing in large and diverse organizations. This includes identifying and recruiting representative Web users for testing, interviewing and observing users, planning and conducting a variety of usability tests, analyzing and reporting test results, and making recommendations to improve usability.
- 1.5 Web Usability Tool Development Skills - Each individual of the proposed team should have at least three years of demonstrated skills and experience in developing usability tools such as surveys to determine the Web needs and preferences of customers, online usability surveys, and materials for recruiting and screening volunteers for testing.
- 1.6 Web Usability Training Skills – Each individual of the proposed team should have at least three years of demonstrated skills and experience in training the basics of usability testing, and in providing skills training. Training skills should include user-centered analysis and conceptual design, practical usability testing, and conducting research for user-centered design.
- 1.7 Performance Measures Development Skills – Each individual of the proposed team should have at least three years experience in maintaining and monitoring performance measurements, and delivering Web usability services.
- 1.8 User-Centered Design Skills - Proposed team should have demonstrated proficiency in user-centered design and implementation of Web sites for large and diverse organizations.
- 1.9 Coaching and Mentoring Skills - The proposed team should have demonstrated skills and experience in effectively educating and mentoring clients in the types of usability activities included in this project. They should be able to evaluate the usability skills of DSHS usability specialists and provide constructive feedback.
- 1.10 Consulting Skills - The proposed team should have the ability to work effectively with others in implementing the project. This includes establishing effective working relations with a variety of individuals who



have ownership in and differing perspectives about the design and content of DSHS Website.

- 1.11 Communication Skills – The proposed team should be proficient at documenting and communicating usability testing results.
- 1.12 Facilitation Skills – The proposed team should be proficient in meeting management and facilitation strategies and techniques.
- 1.13 Quality Assurance Methods – The proposed team should have quality assurance methods for all aspects of Web Usability.
- 1.14 Knowledge of State Government – The proposed team should knowledge of Washington State Agencies and other state government entities.

2. Key Personnel

The proposed team should be available for the entire length of this contract to provide ongoing services. DSHS may, at their sole discretion, without cause, and at any time during the term of a Contract, require immediate replacement of staff identified. The bidder may not substitute Key Personnel proposed for this project without the prior, written approval of DSHS.

Key Personnel will be provided a standard ISSD workstation for onsite work at the DSHS Office Building 2 (OB2) facility in Olympia, Washington. This includes desk, telephone, personal computer, network access, file, print, and fax services.

## **E. FUNDING**

DSHS has budgeted an amount not to exceed \$200,000 for this project. DSHS may reject any proposal in excess of that amount. Any contract awarded is contingent upon the availability of funding.

## **F. DEFINITIONS**

See Exhibit A, Definitions, for the meaning of certain terms used in this RFP.

## SECTION II. GENERAL INFORMATION

### A. PROCUREMENT CONTACT INFORMATION

Upon release of this RFP, all communications concerning this RFP must be directed only to the RFP Coordinator listed below. Any communication directed to DSHS staff, or its consultant, other than the RFP Coordinator may result in disqualification. Any oral communications will be considered unofficial and non-binding to DSHS. Bidders should rely only on written statements issued by the RFP Coordinator.

DSHS RFP Coordinator

Contact:	Sandra G. Elliot, RFP Coordinator Department of Social & Health Services Administrative Services Division / Central Contract Services
Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 45811 Olympia, Washington 98504-5811
Physical Address:	4500 10th Avenue SE Lacey, Washington 98503
Telephone:	(360) 664-6072
FAX:	(360) 664-6184
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:@dshs.wa.gov">@dshs.wa.gov</a>

### B. ACCEPTANCE OF RFP TERMS

A Proposal submitted in response to this RFP shall be considered a binding offer. Acknowledgement of this condition shall be indicated by signature of an officer of the Bidder legally authorized to execute contractual obligations by submitting with the Proposal a signed Bidder Information, Certificates and Assurances Form attached hereto as Exhibit B. A Bidder must clearly identify and thoroughly explain any variations between its Proposal and DSHS' RFP. Failure to do so shall be deemed a waiver of any rights to subsequently modify the terms of performance, except as outlined or specified in the RFP.

### C. PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE

The Procurement Schedule outlines the tentative schedule for important action dates and times. DSHS reserves the right to revise this schedule at any time and will post any amended schedules on the DSHS Procurement Website.

**Figure 1.    *PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE***

DSHS reserves the right to change the ***Schedule*** at any time.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.	Issue RFP	May 22, 2006
2.	Last Date for Accepting Bidder Written Questions by 5:00 PM Pacific Standard Time	June 2, 2006
3.	Issue Response to Written Questions No Later Than	June 9, 2006
4.	Proposal Submission Due by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Day Light time	June 20, 2006
5.	Proposal Evaluation	June 26, 2006 to June 28, 2006
6.	Oral Presentations, If Required	July 10, 2006 to July 14, 2006
7.	Notify Apparent Successful Bidder	July 18, 2006
8.	Notify Unsuccessful Bidders	July 18, 2006
9.	Begin Contract Negotiations	July 25, 2006
10.	Bidder's Request for Debriefing Due by 5:00PM	July 26, 2006
11.	Hold Debriefing Conferences	July 31, 2006 and August 1, 2006
12.	Bidders' Protest(s) Due	August 4, 2006
13.	Contract Execution	Anticipated August 14, 2006

#### **D.    CONTRACT**

DSHS intends to award one (1) contract to provide the services described in this RFP.

Any subcontracts by the contractor selected as a result of this RFP shall require prior written approval by DSHS.

The Contract term shall be eleven (11) months commencing upon the date of execution of the contract by DSHS. After the initial eleven-month time period, DSHS at its sole discretion may extend the contract for two (2) additional one-year terms.

Specific restrictions apply to contracting with current or former state employees pursuant to chapter 42.52 of the Revised Code of Washington. Bidders should familiarize themselves with the requirements prior to submitting a Proposal.

#### **E. INSURANCE**

The Apparently Successful Bidder must comply with the insurance requirements identified in the sample contract attached hereto as Exhibit C.

#### **F. CONTRACT AMENDMENT**

Additional services that are appropriate to the scope of this RFP, as determined by DSHS, may be added to the resulting Contract by a written amendment mutually agreed to and executed by both parties.

#### **G. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION/PUBLIC DISCLOSURE**

Materials submitted in response to this RFP shall become the property of DSHS. All proposals, quotes, lists, evaluation documents and other documents that make up this Procurement shall remain confidential until 1) DSHS makes it available to the public pursuant to RCW 42.17, or 2) the contract, if any, resulting from this RFP is signed by DSHS and the Apparently Successful Bidder. Thereafter, the proposals shall be deemed public records as defined in RCW 42.17.

Bidder's proposal must include a statement on the Letter of Submittal identifying each page of your proposal which contains any proprietary information. Each page claimed to be proprietary must be clearly marked by printing the word "Proprietary" on the lower right hand corner of each page which contains any proprietary information.

If DSHS receives a request to view or copy your proposal, DSHS will respond according to applicable law and DSHS policy governing public disclosure. DSHS will not disclose any information marked "Proprietary" in your proposal without giving you ten (10) days notice for you to seek a court injunction against the disclosure. You may not mark your entire proposal proprietary.

#### **H. WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS**

Proposals should be based on the material contained in this RFP, any related amendment(s), and any questions and answers directed through the RFP Coordinator.

## **I. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Bidders should fax, email or mail written questions to the RFP Coordinator. Early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions will be accepted until the date set forth in the Procurement Schedule. Questions and Answers will be on the DSHS Procurement Website.

## **J. RFP AMENDMENTS**

DSHS reserves the right, at any time before execution of a contract, to amend all or a portion of this RFP. Amendments will be posted on the DSHS Procurements Web site, if applicable. If there is any conflict between amendments or between an amendment and the RFP, whichever document was issued last in time shall be controlling.

## **K. RETRACTION OF THIS RFP**

DSHS and the State of Washington are not obligated to contract for the services specified in this RFP. DSHS reserves the right to retract this RFP in whole, or in part, at any time without penalty.

## **L. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

Proposals must be prepared and submitted no later than the proposal submission date and time specified in the Procurement Schedule. The proposal is to be sent to the RFP Coordinator, either by mail or hand delivery, at the address specified in Section II.A., Procurement Contact Information. DSHS will not accept any proposal submitted by fax. DSHS will accept proposal submitted by email.

You should allow sufficient time to ensure timely receipt by the RFP Coordinator. You assume the risk for the method of delivery and for any delay in the mailing or delivery of your proposal.

DSHS reserves the right to disqualify any proposal and withdraw it from consideration if it is received after the proposal submission due date and time. All proposals and any accompanying documentation become the property of DSHS and will not be returned.

## **M. NONRESPONSIVE PROPOSALS**

All proposals will be reviewed by the RFP Coordinator to determine compliance with administrative requirements and instructions specified in this RFP. DSHS may reject or withdraw your proposal at any time as nonresponsive for any of the following reasons:

- Incomplete proposal;
- Submission of alternative proposals;
- Failure to comply with any part of this RFP or any exhibit to this RFP;
- Submission of incorrect, misleading, or false information.

**N. MINOR IRREGULARITIES**

DSHS may waive minor administrative irregularities related to any proposal.

**O. COST TO PROPOSE**

DSHS will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Bidder in preparing, submitting or presenting a proposal for this RFP.

**P. JOINT PROPOSALS**

If you submitted a joint proposal, with one or more other bidders, you must designate the prime bidder. The prime bidder will be DSHS's sole point of contact, will sign the contract and any amendments, and will bear sole responsibility for performance under the contract.

**Q. EXHIBITS**

Exhibits to this RFP are:

- Exhibit A - Definitions
- Exhibit B - Bidder Information, Certifications and Assurances Form
- Exhibit C - Sample Contract

You should be sure that you have downloaded a complete copy of this RFP and all attached exhibits, as listed above. The procurement documents can be accessed at <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/msa/ccs/>. If you are unable to download the documents, you should contact the RFP Coordinator.

It is not a ground for protest if your copy of this RFP should be missing any exhibit or pages of the RFP.

**R. WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSALS**

After a Proposal has been submitted, Bidders may withdraw a proposal at any time up to the proposal submission date and time specified in the Procurement Schedule. A written request signed by an authorized representative of the Bidder must be submitted to the RFP Coordinator. After withdrawing a previously submitted proposal, the Bidder may submit another proposal at any time up to the proposal submission date and time.

**S. NOTIFY APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL BIDDER**

DSHS will notify the Apparently Successful Bidder on or about the date and time specified in the Procurement Schedule of the selection of the Apparently Successful Bidder by written notice via mail, email and/or fax. DSHS will notify separately the Unsuccessful Bidders on or about the date and time specified in the Procurement Schedule of the non-selection of the Unsuccessful Bidder by written notice via mail, email and/or fax.

## **T. BIDDER DEBRIEFING CONFERENCE**

If DSHS does not select your proposal, you may request a debriefing conference. You must submit your request in writing to the RFP Coordinator by mail or fax by the date specified in the Procurement Schedule, Section II.C., Figure 1.

Debriefing conferences will be held on July 31, 2006 and August 1, 2006. The debriefing conference may be conducted either in person or by telephone and will be scheduled for a maximum of one hour.

Discussion at the debriefing conference will be limited to the following:

- Evaluation and scoring of your proposal;
- Critique of your proposal based on evaluators' comments; and
- Review of your final score in comparison with other Bidders' final scores without identifying the Bidders.

*Identification of the other Bidders, their proposals or evaluations will not be allowed.*

## **U. PROTEST**

Protests may be made only after DSHS has sent notification to the Apparently Successful Bidder and to the unsuccessful bidders. In order to submit a protest under this RFP, a Bidder must have submitted a Proposal for this RFP, and have requested and participated in a debriefing conference. It is the sole administrative remedy available within DSHS. The following is the process for filing a protest:

### **1. GROUNDS FOR PROTEST**

A protest may be made based on these grounds only:

- Arithmetic errors were made by DSHS in computing the score;
- DSHS failed to follow the procedures established in this RFP document, or to follow applicable State or federal laws or regulations; or
- Bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator.

### **2. PROTEST FORM AND CONTENT**

A protest must state all of the facts and arguments upon which the protest is based, and the grounds for your protest. It must be in writing and signed by a person authorized to bind the Bidder to a contractual relationship. At a minimum, the protest must include:

- The name of the protesting Bidder, mailing address and phone number, and the name of the individual responsible for submission of the protest;
- The RFP number and name of the issuing agency;
- A detailed and complete statement of the specific action(s) by DSHS under protest;

- The grounds for the protest;
- Description of the relief or corrective action requested.

You may attach to your protest any documentation you offer to support your protest.

### 3. SUBMITTING A PROTEST

Your protest must be in writing and must be signed. You must mail or hand deliver your protest to the RFP Coordinator using the same mailing or delivery address provided in this RFP for submitting your proposal. *Protests may not be submitted by fax or email.* DSHS must receive the written protest within **five (5)** business days after the debriefing conference.

### 4. PROTEST PROCESS

The RFP Coordinator will forward your protest to the DSHS designated Protest Coordinator with copies of the following:

- This RFP and any amendments,
- Your proposal,
- The evaluators' scoring sheets, and
- Any other documents showing evaluation and scoring of your proposal.

DSHS will follow these procedures in reviewing your protest:

- DSHS will conduct an objective review of your protest, based on the contents of your written protest and the above materials provided by the RFP Coordinator.
- DSHS will send you a written decision within five (5) business days after DSHS receives your protest, unless more time is required to review the protest and make a determination. The protesting Bidder will be notified by the RFP Coordinator if additional time is necessary.
- DSHS will make a final determination of your protest and will either:
  - 1) Find that your protest lacks merit and uphold DSHS's actions;
  - 2) Find that any errors in the RFP process or in DSHS's conduct did not influence the outcome of the RFP, and uphold DSHS's actions; or
  - 3) Find merit in the protest and provide options for corrective action by DSHS which may include:
- That DSHS correct any errors and re-evaluate all proposals affected by its determination of the protest;



- That DSHS reissue the RFP document; or
- That DSHS make other findings and take such other action as may be appropriate.

## **V. EXECUTION OF THE CONTRACT**

If you are the Apparently Successful Bidder, you will be expected to sign a contract with DSHS and any subsequent amendments that may be required to address specific work or services as needed. A sample contract is attached as Exhibit C.

DSHS reserves the right to negotiate the specific wording of the Statement of Work, based on the requirements of this RFP and the terms of your proposal.

If you fail or refuse to sign the contract or any subsequent amendment within ten (10) business days of delivery to you, DSHS may elect to cancel the award and may award the contract to the next-highest ranked finalist.

Any subcontracts necessary to perform the contract shall be subject to the prior written approval of DSHS.

*If at contract award or anytime thereafter any specifically named individual(s) identified in the Proposal to work on this engagement are not available, DSHS has the right to approve or reject any change in Contractor personnel.*

## SECTION III. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

### A. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

The four major sections of the proposal are to be submitted in the order noted below in Section III.C., Contents of Binders:

Proposals must provide information in the same order as presented in this document with the same headings. The questions in each of the four sections are described below. All questions must be answered and all items must be included as part of the proposal for the proposal to be considered responsive, even though certain items may not be scored.

### B. FORMAT OF PROPOSAL

1. Proposals must be submitted on standard eight and one-half by eleven inch (8 ½" x 11") white paper.
2. A font size not less than 12 point must be used.
3. Proposals must be submitted in a three-ring binder with tabs separating the major sections of the proposal as specified in Section III.C.
4. Identify each copy of your proposal by including Proposal to RFP #0634-216; the title of this RFP, *DSHS Internet Website Usability Study*; and your name on the front cover of your proposal and on all attachments to your proposal.
5. If you choose to submit your proposal by email
  - a. Separately, provide electronic readable media in the form of a Compact Disc – CD containing the entire proposal by mail or delivery. See Section III.C below for details
  - b. To achieve the requirement of tabs separating major sections of the proposal, insert a page between each section which identifies the section number and title following that page.
  - c. Each page should have a footer identifying the procurement number and title as well as your name and page number.
6. Email proposals should be sent to [@DSHS.wa.gov](mailto:@DSHS.wa.gov).

### C. CONTENTS OF BINDER

Submit one binder marked "Original" with Bidder's name and four (4) copies. Copies of the proposal may be submitted in separate binders. In addition, include one soft copy in Microsoft Word 2000 file format or Microsoft Excel 2000 file format if appropriate on a portable media or electronic readable media (Compact Disc [CD]), with a label on the CD or diskette identifying your name and RFP #0634-216 of your proposal containing the following:

- Table of Contents
- Section 1: Administrative Requirements
- Section 2: Technical Proposal
- Section 3: Management / Experience and Qualifications Proposal
- Section 4: Cost Proposal

Bidders that do not submit these documents in separate sections may be considered nonresponsive resulting in DSHS rejecting the bid.

Bids should be clear, concise and well organized with a logical flow. Links to Websites for required information is not permitted and may be considered nonresponsive resulting in DSHS rejecting the bid. Information pertaining to the response of this RFP must be contained within the bid.

## **D. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS (SECTION 1 OF PROPOSAL BINDER)**

Please respond to each item in the same order in which they appear below.

### **1. Letter of Submittal**

Bidders must submit a prepared and signed submittal letter on Bidder's official business letterhead stationery. The submittal letter must be included as the first page of Section 1. Signing the submittal letter indicates that the Bidder accepts the terms and conditions of RFP #0634-216. The Bidder's letter of Submittal must include the following:

- 1.1.1 Name, address, principal place of business, telephone number, fax number, and email address of legal entity or individual with whom contract would be written;
- 1.1.2 The name of your contact person for this RFP;
- 1.1.3 A narrative demonstrating how you meet the mandatory and desirable qualification as specified in Section I.D.
- 1.1.4 A detailed list of all materials and enclosures included in your Proposal;
- 1.1.5 A list of all RFP amendments downloaded by the Bidder from the DSHS Procurements Web site, if applicable, and listed in order by amendment number and date. If there are no RFP amendments, include a statement to that effect;

- 1.1.6 The Bidder's guarantee that its Proposal, as submitted, will remain in full force and effect for 180 days;
- 1.1.7 A statement substantiating that the person who signs the letter is authorized to contractually bind the Bidder's firm;
- 1.1.8 Identification of the page numbers on the Bidder's Proposal that are marked "Proprietary or Confidential" Information; and
- 1.1.9 Any statements you wish to convey to the RFP Coordinator.

**1.2 Exhibit B - Bidder Information, Certificates and Assurance Form**

A completed Bidder Information, Certificates and Assurance Form Exhibit B. Please sign and include any attachments that are necessary.

If you submit your proposal by email, include signed copies of Exhibit B in the same delivery as the electronic media.

**E. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL – MAXIMUM OF 40 PERCENT OF TOTAL SCORE  
(SECTION 2 OF PROPOSAL BINDER)**

Please respond to each question in the same order in which they appear.

Based upon your experience in Web usability, user-centered Website design and implementation engagements similar in scope and nature, describe your approach for each service deliverable. The proposal should include a description of the bidder's planned approach to meeting the activities above, including, but not limited to, a project outline, list of proposed service deliverables, staffing plan for the entire contract period and timeline for completion of project activities.

DSHS will negotiate the specific wording of the Statement of Work for any Contract awarded with the successful bidder, based on the requirements of this RFP and the terms of the successful bidder's proposal.

Describe the firm's methodology for providing the following services. Your Technical Proposal must not exceed twenty (20) pages, including attachments. If you exceed the page limit, DSHS may consider your proposal non-responsive and withdraw it from consideration at any time.

- 1. Describe the methodology, including quality assurance methods, that demonstrates your firm's ability to provide formal Web usability training services, as requested in Service 1, Section I.C.1 through C.1.4 (20 points).
- 2. Describe the methodology, including quality assurance methods, that demonstrates your firm's ability to provide Web usability study and testing

services, as well as coaching and mentoring services as requested in Service 2, Section I.C.2 through C.2.17 (25 points).

3. Describe the methodology, including quality assurance methods, that demonstrates your firm's ability to provide usability tool development services, as requested in Service 3, Section I.C.3 through C.3.3 (10 points).
4. Describe the methodology, including quality assurance methods, that demonstrates your firm's ability to provide Web usability consulting services, as requested in Service 4, Section I.C.4 through C.4.7 (15 points).
5. Describe your approach in providing other proposed vendor services, if any, as requested in Section I.C.5 (5 points).
6. Overall approach (25 points)

The score for this section will be calculated using this formula:  
 $(\text{total score}/100) * 40 = \text{score}$

**F. MANAGEMENT, EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS PROPOSAL –  
MAXIMUM OF 30 PERCENT OF TOTAL SCORE  
(SECTION 3 OF PROPOSAL BINDER)**

Please respond to each question in the same order in which they appear. Staffing plan must include at least one full time member with at least three years of recent Web Usability experience and Usability Analyst Certification.

Based upon your experience with Web usability testing, training and implementation of user-centered Websites similar in scope and nature provide a detailed listing of the Key Personnel or team you propose for this engagement, including the titles of staff, roles, and a current resume of each person proposed. Resumes must detail experience with the required skills listed in Section I.D., Minimum Qualifications, of this RFP. Each resume must not be longer than four (4) pages, including attachments. If you exceed the page limit, DSHS may consider your proposal nonresponsive and withdraw it from consideration at any time.

The resumes should include the following:

1. Company Experience and Qualifications (20 points)
  - 1.1 Provide Usability Professionals' Association membership verification.

- 1.2 List and describe your company's experience working with Washington State agencies, or other government entities.
- 1.3 List your company's experience with large and / or complex user-centered designs and Websites implementation.

2. Individual Experience and Qualifications (80 points)

- 2.1 Employment history listing the projects, employer, role on each project and timeframes that the individual performed activities conducting Web usability training, testing, tool development, coaching, mentoring, and providing consulting services on user-centered Web design and implementation. Also include the size and complexity of the Web design and implementation.
- 2.2 Employment history listing the experience obtained while working for government organizations. Include the agencies projects and timeframes.
- 2.3 List the individual's three largest user-centered Web designs and implementation. List the approximate number of Website pages included in the design.
- 2.4 Education history of training received including Usability Analyst certification. In addition list the education / training related to Web usability.

If multiple staff are proposed, their score will be based on the percentage of hours they are proposed for this engagement. To determine the score the following formula will be used:

- Proposed staff person total hours = Total estimated hours for all service deliverables.
- Percentage of hours = proposed staff person total hours / total proposed hours (all staff total).
- Individual's score = (Total points) \* percentage of hours.

The total score for this section will be calculated using the following formula:

Sum of (all individual score) plus (total bidders experience score) / 100 \* 30

*Note: All individual score (80 points maximum)  
Total bidders experience score (20 points maximum)*

**G. COST PROPOSAL - MAXIMUM OF 20 PERCENT OF TOTAL SCORE  
(SECTION 4 OF PROPOSAL BINDER)**

Please respond to each question in the same order in which they appear.

1. Provide costs for each service as requested in Section I.C.1 through C.5. List the cost for each deliverable. Costs must be group around each service. All service deliverables are fixed cost and must include total costs.

Bidder travel and material expenses related to producing these service deliverables must be included in the fixed cost. Service Deliverables include the following.

- 1.1 Cost for Web usability classroom training. Include cost for group (block of approximately 24 slots) and individual classroom training in support of Service 1 deliverables, Section I.C.1 through C.1.4.
- 1.2 Cost for usability study and testing as well as coaching and mentoring in support of Service 2 deliverables, Section I.C.2 through C.2.17.
- 1.3 Cost for usability tool development in support of Service 3 deliverables, Section I.C.3 through C.3.3.
- 1.4 Cost for approximately 20 hours per month of Web usability consulting services for the life of the contract in support of Service 4 deliverables, Section I.C.4 through C.4.7.

For the deliverables listed above, provide a list of all contractor staff involved in producing the deliverables including the estimated hours per individual. Costs do not need to be listed. Only the individual's name and total estimated hours of effort to produce the deliverables.

Scoring Calculation: Determine total cost for service deliverables. Add costs for each service deliverable to obtain a total.

Calculate points by taking the lowest total amount and giving maximum points. For all higher rates, use the formula below:

$$17 \text{ total cost points available} * (\text{Lowest Bid Amount} / \text{Bidder Amount})$$

- 1.5 Proposed Hourly Rate for other vendor service deliverables and activities, if any, in support of Service 5 deliverable, Section I.C.5.
  - 1.5.1 Hourly rates for expert staff with at least three years of recent experience conducting usability studies, testing and user-centered design.

- 1.5.2 Total for five-day (40-hour) work effort. Including any and all additional costs associated with using these staff such as travel, lodging (per state government rates), etc. Provide hourly rate and total five (5) day work effort costs to include all additional expenses.

Score Calculation: Divide the total five-day work effort cost by 40 hours to determine total hourly rate.

Calculate points by taking the lowest total hourly rate and giving maximum points. For all higher rates, use the formula below:

$3 \text{ total cost points available} * (\text{lowest total hourly rate} / \text{total hourly rate})$



## SECTION IV. EVALUATION

### A. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Responsive proposals will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements stated in this Procurement and any amendments issued. The evaluation of proposals shall be accomplished by an evaluation team to be designated by DSHS who will be responsible for the review, evaluation and scoring of Bidder proposals. DSHS, at its sole discretion, will select finalists for an oral presentation. If oral presentations are held, evaluators will evaluate and score the oral presentations of bidders selected as finalists.

### B. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Each Proposal will first be screened to determine if the Bidder has complied with appropriate Administrative Requirements and Submittal Instructions. Each Proposal must meet the Administrative Requirements to be eligible to submit a proposal to this RFP. If your proposal does not meet all Administrative Requirements for this RFP, DSHS may consider your proposal nonresponsive and withdraw it from consideration at any time. Evaluators will score all responsive proposals and award points up to the maximum points available for each question.

### C. SCORING OF PROPOSALS

The maximum number of evaluation points available is 100.  
The Administrative Requirements are evaluated on a pass/fail basis. The following weighting and points will be assigned to the proposal for evaluation purposes:

#### WRITTEN PROPOSAL

Proposal Approach - 40%	40 Points
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Experience and Qualifications - 30%	30 Points
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Cost Proposal - 20%	20 Points
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<b>Sub-Total (for Written Proposal)</b>	<b>90 Points</b>
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Oral Presentations / Interview [finalist(s) only] - 10%	10 Points
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Bidder and Staff References [finalist(s) only]	<b>Mandatory</b>
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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 Points</b>
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Your sub-total score for the written proposal will be the average of the scores of the evaluators who review your written proposal. Your final Total Evaluation Score will be the average points awarded for your written proposal, your references if applicable, and your oral presentations if applicable.

#### **D. EVALUATION OF ORAL PRESENTATIONS – MAXIMUM 10 PERCENT OF TOTAL SCORE**

DSHS may, after evaluating the written proposals, elect to schedule oral presentations of the finalists. The oral presentations will be scheduled for two (2) hours and will consist of: Presentation of training material, demonstration of training skills and knowledge of Web usability and user-centered design. The RFP Coordinator will notify finalists of the date, time, and location of the oral presentations.

DSHS will select evaluators for the oral presentations based on their qualifications, experience and background relevant to this RFP. These evaluators may include evaluators who reviewed the written proposals or DSHS staff who will work with the successful bidder(s). Evaluators will score the oral presentations in accordance with RFP requirements and evaluation criteria.

The score of this section will be calculated using this formula:  
 $(\text{Total points} / 100) * 10 = \text{score}$

#### **E. BIDDERS AND STAFF REFERENCE CHECKS**

Provide three (3) references for the company and for each individual of the proposed team that may be contacted to verify company's and individuals' qualifications and other information. Include the names, telephone numbers, dates of services, and a brief description of the similar services you provided them in the past. References will only be contacted for finalist(s).

At DSHS's sole discretion, references may be contacted on both the Bidder and proposed staff for the top scoring proposals only. All references check questions must pass a minimum score or the bidder may be rejected from further consideration at the DSHS's sole discretion. Reference checks are a pass-fail and do not count towards part of the final score.

#### **F. FINAL PROPOSAL SCORE**

Your final proposal score is the average points awarded for your written and oral presentation.

## **G. FINAL DETERMINATION OF APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL BIDDER(S)**

DSHS program staff and/or management may conduct a final review of the evaluation and scoring of finalist(s).

In this final review, DSHS may consider past or current performance of any DSHS contracts by a finalist(s), and any experience of the program or DSHS in working with a finalist(s) under any past or current contract with DSHS.

DSHS management shall make the final determination as to which bidder(s), initially designated as finalist(s), shall be officially selected and notified as the Apparently Successful Bidder(s) under this Procurement.

In doing so, DSHS management shall be guided, but not bound, by the scores awarded by the evaluators. Program staff and DSHS management shall determine which proposals reviewed during this final selection process will best meet the needs of DSHS and, specifically, the needs of the Information System Services Division.

Any bidder who would be an Apparently Successful Bidder based on the scores awarded by the evaluators, and who is not selected, shall be provided, upon request, with the reasons for selecting a bidder with a lower final score.